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Hector Monthly Meeting of Friends. Memorial Respecting Lydia Hallock. 1865

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MEMORIAL

OF

Hector Monthly Meeting

OF FRIENDS,

RESPECTING

LYDIA HALLOCK,

DECEASED.

ITHACA, N. Y.:
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1865.

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TESTIMONY

OF

Hector Monthly Meeting of Friends, Concerning

LYDIA HALLOCK, DECEASED.

LYDIA HALLOCK was the youngest daughter of Benjamin and Bridget Haight, and was born in Monkton, Addison county, Vermont, the 11th of 12th month, 1800. She received but little outward religious instruction in early life; her parents being neither of them, at that time, professors of religion; but through the mercy of a compassionate Redeemer, she was preserved through childhood, in a state of comparative innocence. It appears, however, that her father had a care that she should walk circumspectly, and as she advanced in years restrained her much from mingling in gay circles; thereby setting a good example to those, who, making a profession of holiness themselves, indulge their children until like Eli, they lose the blessing of the Lord; he was convinced of Friend's principles before his death, which took place when the subject of this memoir was about the 20th year of her age; who was always an obedient and dutiful child to her parents, and during her father's last illness, made much sacrifice of personal comfort that she might do all in her power for his relief, allowing herself but little rest for several months; and she subsequently adverted to this season with apparent satisfaction, saying, that she never enjoyed better health at any period of her life, and she commended to others the faithful discharge of filial duty, remarking, "children cannot do too much for their parents."

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After her father's death, she was employed in school teaching most of the time until her marriage, making her home with one of her brothers; and during this period, while indulging in the pleasures and amusements so fascinating to youth, she became greatly concerned about her soul's salvation, and was brought to see the emptiness of such things in satisfying the immortal soul, but her mental conflicts were very great before she was able to resist surrounding temptations. At one time a company having been invited to her brother's on her account, and she being proficient in dancing, finally yielded to their solicitations to join in that diversion, after which her sufferings from remorse were not easily to be described, and she was engaged in imploring strength to shun in future those deceitful pleasures which lead down to the chambers of death; striving to surrender all to Him whose right it is to rule and reign in every heart; at one time while thus occupied, her brother entered her room and found her in such agony of spirit that he thought she could not long live in that situation; but He who holdeth all power in His hands, and who willeth not the destruction of any, in His own good time spoke peace to her troubled soul; she suddenly experienced a great alteration in her feelings, all nature seemed changed, appearing to wear a more pleasing aspect, and her joy was inexpressible, being filled with the wonderful love of God.

It would have been particularly interesting to us, to have had from her own pen, some relation of this eventful period in her experience: but in the absence of any memoranda of hers, we feel inclined to gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing valuable may be lost of what can still be collected respecting her.

From the time above alluded to, it is believed that she adopted many of the practices of Friends, very much in the cross to her own inclination, particularly the use of the plain language, of which she expressed that she would have freely offered up her natural life if that would have been accepted; to avoid the use of

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which she joined the Methodists, and remained in profession with that people about one year, and was told by some of their number that she had been a bright and shining light among them, and they hoped that she would be the same among Friends.

She had taken much pride in dress, and being skillful in embroidery, it is related that she was strongly urged to do some for her friends, but what she found was wrong for herself she could not do for others; wherein is observable that consistency of conduct which afterwards marked her course through life.—Good progress was thus made in the work of reformation; but being sensible that she had evaded the cross with respect to some things, and that no offering of her own choosing would be accepted in lieu of the thing called for; and not finding that consolation which her soul desired, she withdrew from the Society of which she had, for so short a time, been a member.

We are informed that she requested the care of Friends in the autumn of 1827, when the Society, as is well known, was in a very unsettled state on account of many of its members having imbibed principles of infidelity; and a part of the committee appointed to visit her were Hicksites, one of whom asked her which party she was going to join, she readily replied, "as to party, I know nothing about it; I have requested to become a member of the Society which George Fox was the founder of." As she was firm in her belief of the meritorial sacrifice of our Lord and Savior, her case was not decided until the separation took place in 1828, when she was received a member of Ferrisburg Monthly Meeting. Her mother, also, a little before joined in membership with Friends.

It appears that from this time our dear friend yielded herself the servant of obedience unto righteousness, and her mind became enlarged to understand the mysteries of the kingdom—as it is written, "if any man will do His will he shall know of the doctrine." She deeply regretted not having read the Bible more in her youth, which she often said was profitable for reproof, correction and instruction, that the man of God

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may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work, and she was concerned that Friends should set their children a good example therein—not setting the letter above the Spirit, but reading the Scriptures often, with desires to be enabled by the Spirit to understand and obey them.

We have not been able to ascertain the exact time of her first appearing in the ministry. She was encouraged to make this sacrifice by some Friends travelling in that capacity, who were led to point out her situation; she afterwards recurred to the labors of these strangers, as being very comforting and confirming to her.

In 1829 she was united in marriage with Burling Hallock, and removed to Peru, Clinton county, N. Y., within the limits of Ferrisburg Quarterly Meeting. In the relations of wife and mother she was kind and affectionate, exerting herself to perform her part, even in temporal things; and few, it is apprehended, have exceeded her in anxious solicitude for the spiritual welfare of her children, being concerned to imbue their youthful minds with the truth, and carefully guarding against the indulgence of any thing, however trifling in itself, which might tend to foster pride; and she often had a word of caution or encouragement to the youth of her acquaintance, by whom she was respected.

Being practically consistent with her profession, in a watchful life and conversation, in the plainness and simplicity of her apparel, and the furniture of her house, and discharging her duty in these respects towards her family, she was qualified, availingly, in obedience to the Lord's requiring, to teach transgressors His ways. According to information received, she was acknowledged a minister about ten years after she became a member, and several times had certificates from the Meetings to which she belonged to travel in the ministry, which visits she performed to the satisfaction of her friends and the peace of her own mind. The first of much length was in the fall of 1835, in company with Elizabeth Macomber, in which she had

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many proving seasons; one night being made sensible that her youngest child (thirteen months old) was laying at the point of death, she felt as though she must return immediately; in the morning Elizabeth came to her room, and said, "thou hast said in thy heart, that if thy child should die thou couldst never go and leave thy little ones again; but I have prayed that its life may be spared, and have offered one of my children instead;" seeing such great faith and submission in her companion, was very strengthening to her to pursue the journey; they soon heard that the child had been very sick but was better, and soon after recovered. They were from home on this journey about three months. In 1837 she attended New England Yearly Meeting and some of its subordinate Meetings. In the fall of 1842 she visited the Southern and Eastern quarters of this Yearly Meeting; and the winter following attended the Half-Year's Meeting in Canada West, and the Meetings belonging to it. The two last mentioned journies occupied nearly five months.

Whenever absent from home, on truth's account, while concerned for her own preservation she did not forget those left behind. In a letter to her husband dated Leister, 6th mo., 7th, 1837, she says, "my love in that which is unchangeable still continues to be unto thee and my dear children, with a true desire for your preservation every way in the truth of our God; for I believe that I may say, that we have been made sensible that all things that can be enjoyed appertaining to this life will fade and come to an end; but to know a well grounded hope in the Lord, who is without beginning of days or end of years, whose kingdom is from everlasting to everlasting, is precious and blessed, and happy are all those who have received the promise of this inheritance in their own hearts; they have more cause to joy and rejoice, than they that enjoy the increase of corn, wine and oil, or any thing that is visible."

In another, written in 1842, we find the following aspiration, "Oh, that I may be kept in the low valley of humiliation, that I may feel the Lord to be my lead-

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er, teacher and guide, for sensible I am that without His holy aid and assistance, I can do nothing that will redound to His glory."

Lydia Hallock, in common with other faithful Friends, mourned the obvious effects of hetorodox principles promulgated of latter times—principles at variance with those in which she most surely believed; and she felt constrained, from time to time, to testify against them and the practices resulting therefrom; even previous to much manifest unsoundness, her mind at times waded under a sense of the secret working of that desolating spirit which eventually produced a separation in her Quarterly Meeting; about which time she received a letter from one who was probably not aware that her feelings differed from his own in relation to the cause of divisions among us; and a copy of her reply, descriptive of her views on the subject, being found among her papers, we here insert it nearly entire, as follows:

"Thou expressed a wish for my present and everlasting welfare, and sorrow for the many trials that I have had to pass through, which have been many and various of late; peculiarly so, in beholding the devastation that the enemy has made within our borders; how has the gold become dim, and the most fine gold changed: which is cause of mourning and lamentation to all those who are devoted to the cause of truth and righteousness in the earth. While attending our Yearly Meeting this spring, I met with a ministering friend, who said that she believed that the Scriptures were the "more sure word of prophecy" that Peter spoke of, "to which we do well to take heed;" I quoted George Fox, where he went to the steeple house and there saw the people as fallow ground, and the priest as a great lump of earth; who said that he could not hold, but was made to cry out, "Oh, no, it is not the Scriptures, but the word of life and light in the heart." She replied that he lived a great while after that, and we did not know but that he changed his views; I told her we had no account that he did, and his writings went to show that he lived and died

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in the belief that he was early convinced of; and the doctrine he promulgated I believe is nothing short of primitive christianity revived; it was that which united and compacted us together in one body, we being gathered together into the belief of certain principles and doctrines by the force of truth upon our understandings, and its power and influence upon our hearts; these principles and doctrines, and the practices necessarily depending upon them, are as it were the terms that have drawn us together, and the bond by which we became centered into one body and fellowship, and distinguished from others. We, as a people, have never undervalued or overrated the Scriptures of truth; though there have those arisen among us that have done so, and preached and printed doctrine contrary to them; and I fully believe with Thomas Shillitoe, that unless we testify against the unsound writings of J. J. Gurney, which are spread as the doctrines of Friends, that the Society will go gradually down, and they will find themselves without the Lord Jesus in the world. It behooves all who are directly or indirectly sustaining erroneous doctrine, which is the true cause of the present divided state of our Society, to ponder deeply the responsibility they are assuming, and the consequence that must inevitably result from the course they are pursuing. Human plans and efforts can be of but little or no avail; the wound must be probed to the bottom, and a healthy state restored, only by the immediate power of the great Physician, to which we are bound individually to submit; it is the peaceable spirit of Jesus that we need to be endowed with, leading into a capacity to labor heartily for the removal of wrong things, and suppressing the disposition to connive at or spread principles adverse to those always held by faithful Friends. When any have been in error, they must be willing to be convinced of it; if we are sufficiently abased before the Lord, he will anoint the eye, give clearness of vision, enable to see where the truth has been departed from, and clothe with strength to remove every thing with which he has a controversy; then like the hewn stones

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of the temple, every one will be prepared for his proper place, and the great Master Builder will delight to bless us, and cement us together in love. I well remember that upwards of twenty years ago, when we first met in a family opportunity, thou declared that the widow's mite was more than all the rest; and the language of my heart was, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief," and it is my belief to the present day, that He is the Helper, Leader and Teacher himself, that He is able to make wise unto salvation; and this was always the belief of sound Friends; they never did set the letter above the spirit, and I trust and believe that the Lord will always have a seed that will know and do His will. Oh, that Zion would arise and shake herself from the dust of the earth, be willing to dwell alone, and not be reckoned among the nations; then her cords would be lengthened, and her stakes strengthened, and her praises would arise as sweet incense before the throne of His majesty on high; but whether this will ever be the case with us as a people, or whether we shall be as the broken fragments of a vessel upon the boisterous ocean, a few here and a few there, I know not; but one thing I do know, that the Lord knoweth them that are his, and he deigns to bless them; they shall never be confounded; they shall be as mount Zion that cannot be removed. And now my dear friend, let us recur to first principles, and hold fast the profession of our faith, nothing wavering, that we may be enabled in and through the great Head of the church, to do His will while here on earth. That we may be able to say with the apostle Paul, "I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is a crown laid up for me, and not for me only, but for all those that love His appearing," is the desire of my heart."

In the spring of 1855, she came with her family to reside within the limits of this Meeting, where she remained until the time of her death, (having previously spent several months here in the family of her daughter); and we can testify, that during the time of her sojourning among us, her example held forth to others,

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the inviting language, come follow me as I am endeavoring to follow Christ.

Having been of a delicate constitution through life, and physical weakness rather increasing, she was not always able to attend meeting; but when permitted thus to mingle with her friends, her solid waiting was calculated to impress the minds of beholders with the spirituality of the worship in which she was engaged; and she often exhorted Friends to be constant in the attendance of meetings, sometimes saying that she thought nothing but sickness a reasonable excuse for absenting ourselves therefrom. As an instance of her faithfulness in this respect, she at one time in her life had an acquaintance come to see her on meeting morning, whom she told that she would like a visit from her, but it was meeting day and she felt it her duty to attend, and added, "when my brother* came from Canada, whom I had not seen for several years, I felt no liberty to stay at home, but invited him to go with me; and I will extend the same invitation to thee."

It grieved her to see Friends stand around the yard after meeting, which she said was not the place to do business, and if they had gained any good in the meeting she thought there was danger of losing it by that practice.

Her knowledge in things Divine, to use her own language, "was not obtained from books or from men," for having witnessed the work of regeneration and sanctification to be begun and carried on in her own heart, she could experimentally speak of the matchless mercy of God in Christ Jesus; at times publicly pleading with the unregenerate, in moving language, to accept the offers of His love; frequently citing the text, "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool;" and it pleased the great Dispenser of every good and perfect gift, to clothe her at times with the spirit of discernment in a remarkable manner, by

* Her brother was not a professor of religion.

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which she was enabled to speak to the states of meetings and individuals with much clearness.

A conspicuous feature in the character of this dear friend, was her readiness always to give unto others a reason of the hope that was in her; and though not one that sought for unnecessary controversy, yet when she met with libertine spirits, or any who through ignorance were disposed to question the truth of the religion which we profess, or the necessity of our distinguishing testimonies, it was then peculiarly evident that she was endowed with a qualification to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; being furnished with argument suitable for the occasion, which her opposers were unable to gainsay or resist; and some of these we have reason to suppose, were affected somewhat like king Agrippa formerly, when he said, "almost thou persuadest me to be a christian."

In conversation with her friends she would frequently say, in substance, that she must be faithful to her own convictions, let others do as they would; and she believed that such faithfulness to our religious principles would lead *all* into great circumspection of conduct; and that the most exact honesty and uprightness would then characterise our business transactions in the world, as well as our intercourse with each other. While no way deficient in appreciating all temporal blessings, she lamented over those whom she apprehended were too much occupied with them, and repeatedly expressed her belief that the riches of this world were doing much harm among us.

We are thus concerned to portray the character of our departed sister; not, we trust, with any view to self exaltation, but with a hope that being afresh reminded of her exemplary walking while among us, and of her travail of soul on our account, may incite us to increase our dilligence in endeavoring to "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus;" and that those who have not yet fully given up to serve the Lord in their generation, may be induced to follow the example of one who

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chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, for the same Power that called her from the vanities of a sinful world, and made her a "vessel of honor," is able to save all who are obedient to His heavenly teachings; whose voice in our hearts, she often testified, "is very intelligible to the attentive listener."

In the year 1856, she laid before our Monthly and Quarterly Meetings, a prospect of paying a visit, in gospel love, to New England Yearly Meeting and the Meetings constituting it; and being furnished with the necessary credentials, she proceeded on her journey, having for companion a female friend of this Meeting, who felt an engagement to accompany her. She returned from this journey in a feeble state of health, having nearly accomplished what she had in view; and it appeared by her returning certificates, that her services were acceptable to Friends where she came.

About the beginning of the following year, our beloved friend was attacked with a painful disorder, which every effort to arrest, or even alleviate, proved unavailing; but she manifested no alarm at the prospect before her, submissively remarking, "we are as much in our proper places in suffering the Lord's will as in doing it;" and it was so ordered, that her usefulness as a minister of the gospel should not terminate with her active life; for during the time that she was mostly confined to the house, which was about eight months, she evinced an unabated concern for the prosperity of Zion; and being visited by many, both Friends and others, she was frequently engaged in declaring to them the way of life and salvation, and in pressing the necessity of their witnessing a preparation for their great change, when their earthly house of this tabernacle should be dissolved; for several of the last weeks of her life such opportunities were remarkable for displaying the unlimited power of God, which enabled her to exercise her gift in a distinct and audible voice, when, owing to her disease, (cancer of the mouth,) it had become difficult for her to articulate ordinarily, so as to be understood.

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At one time, being asked how she was, she said, "I have not been free from pain in a long time excepting two hours last evening, when I had some service to perform for my good Master; then I was entirely free from pain." She sometimes said that no tongue could tell the pain that she endured, yet was never heard to complain; but would often say that she had not a pang too many; once remarking, that she was willing to endure all, for by so doing she should show forth the glory of God, and in the end obtain a white robe, and carry palms of victory in her hands. At one time she told her daughter, who was sitting by her, that she hoped soon to find a place of rest; who replying that she thought it would be so, she added, "my sufferings are so severe I have been carefully looking over the past, fearing there was something that I had omitted to do." To another she said, "thou seest me fast passing away; I am going to join the first-born of all generations."

About ten days before her death, during a severe attack of hemorrhage, when not expecting to survive many hours, she said, that she wanted her friends every where to know that she died in the full faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that she loved the whole human family.

The above expressions, which are but a small portion of those of a like character which fell from her lips, together with the happy expression of countenance after articulation had mostly ceased, indicated the peaceful serenity and resignation with which she anticipated the near approach of death. She, from the first, declined taking any medicine that would be likely to cloud her understanding; and she often expressed a sense of gratitude that she had been favored to retain her mental faculties, unimpaired, during her sickness.

On the morning of the 29th of 8th mo., 1857, being sensible that her departure was near, she took an affectionate leave of those about her, and in about fifteen minutes quietly passed away, we doubt not, to one of those "many mansions" which she so ardently desired

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to be fitted for while here. Her remains were interred in our burial ground at Hector, on the 30th, after a large and solemn meeting, wherein testimony was borne to the sufficiency of that grace that bringeth salvation, and prayer was offered on behalf of those assembled to the Author of all our sure mercies.

Signed on behalf of Hector Monthly Meeting of Friends, held 3d mo., 8th, 1865.

JOHN A. POTTER,
REBEKAH T. POTTER. } Clerks.

The foregoing Testimony from Hector Monthly Meeting, concerning our beloved Friend, Lydia Hallock, (deceased,) has been read and considered in this Meeting, and with the concurrence of the Womens' Meeting is directed to the Meeting for Sufferings, believing it to be a valuable and instructive memorial.

Signed by direction of Scipio Quarterly Meeting of Friends, held at Poplar Ridge, by adjournment, 4th mo., 13th, 1865.

GEORGE F. WOOD, Clerk.

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